California Department of Education
Education Technology Office

SETS (Statewide Education Technology Services) FAQ
Updated 2/8/00
Professional Development and Resources for Technology Support Staff (Spring 2000)

These Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) are prepared to assist applicants in preparing the Statewide Education Technology Services (SETS) Request for Application (RFA). The FAQ and other resources are posted at **http://www.cde.ca.gov/sets/**, a site that is updated as further questions are posed and answered.

NOTE

√ **These FAQs refer specifically to the revised RFA released in January 2000 for the service of Professional Development and Resources for Technology Support Staff.**

√ **Applicants should first read the other FAQs for all SETS, found at: <http://www.cde.ca.gov/sets/>**

2.1 Differences between this RFA and the former RFA
What are the main differences between this (January 2000) RFA and the previous version that was twice released with no successful applicants?

Answer: These are the most basic, general differences.
2.1.1 It is funded in two distinct phases.
2.1.2 It has fewer deliverables.
2.1.3 It has a much more concretely-described set of deliverables, with examples.
2.1.4 It has a clearer expectation for subcontracting and/or collaborating with other SETS contractors and with others to deliver the goods and services.
2.1.5 It rewards, via bonus point options, applicants who have cost-saving proposals.

2.2 Scoring
In Step II (Page 22), there is a "RFA Performance Evaluation Sheet" for this service, and under "B" there are several main questions requiring answers. Will the readers compare only these questions to the application during scoring?

Answer: **No**, these main questions are focal points to assist the readers and the applicants as they approach the application. The detailed requirements are in the **Attachments 1 and 4**, for each service. It is imperative that the applicants use these Attachments for detailed clarification of what is expected from the focal questions.

2.3 Matrix of skills
What should the "matrix of skills" cover?

Answer: See **Attachment 4**. It is a possible model to achieve the deliverable. Applicants may suggest variations on this model, but the variations must provide at least the same information categories as the model.

2.4 Resources
What are "resources" and how are they different from "matrix of skills"?

Answer: Resources are specific products, examples of which are listed in **Attachment 1, Sections I and II**. They are the typical reference tools technology support staff need or use, such as but not limited to technology planning standards and components, network wiring schematics (topologies), purchasing or contracting guidelines, vendor-neutral sources of industry standards for current and emerging technologies, etc. The CDE approves all resources before publication, and, due to recent legislation creating the Commission on Technology and Learning (CTL), some of this work may be deferred, delayed, or revised so as to compliment rather than overlap work of the CTL.

2.5 Filling gaps
How does the applicant fill identified gaps?

Answer: After comparing a wide range of existing professional development opportunities against the matrix of skills, gaps will be noted. Filling the gaps will require the lead agency to either arrange for the production of new professional development training opportunities to fill those gaps or produce those new professional development training opportunities. The goal is to match the matrix with professional development opportunities, so clients can choose a pathway from this statewide comprehensive training system, resulting in personnel acquiring the necessary skills.
Note: A challenging aspect of this process will be in determining the extent to which a professional development opportunity truly provides the matrix-specific skills.

2.6 Planning templates (Attachment 1, Section II)
Why 12 templates?

Answer: These are only examples. The goal is to have versions tailored to some of the more common district and school sizes and locales, thereby reinforcing the concept that "one size does not fit all." These 12 cover the most common client organization configurations and will increase credibility as clients see the match between their needs and this service. Applicants are invited to suggest other approaches that achieve the same result.

2.7 Other SETS contractors
In Phase 2, there is a clear expectation (**Page 14, and Attachment 1**) that the contractor collaborate with and/or subcontract with other SETS contractors. How is this different than just normal collaboration?

Answer: Routine collaboration will occur as all SETS contractors develop their goods and services, communicate as project leads, and share ideas and resources. However, for this service there is a different expectation level, partly to recognize its being the latest to be funded and also to provide more options for the successful applicant if work is to be subcontracted.
A concrete example: The Learning Resources service may possess software or systems useful to the contractor in the process of evaluating items or resources. As the contractor for this service begins to undertake evaluation as part of the responsibility to match existing professional development for technology support staff against the matrix, the expectation would be that the contractor will start with the Learning Resources service. There may be no-cost sharing opportunities, or it may require that this contractor subcontract with the Learning Resources service to provide specialized help or systems. If, after starting with the Learning Resources service, the contractor determines that there are other, more effective options, partnerships, or subcontractors, then the contractor may proceed in order to yield the highest quality product. This example applies to the two other SETS, each for different aspects, referenced on Page 14 and in Attachment 1.

2.8 Maximum pages (re: budget narrative) [added 2/8/00]
The Service Work Plan is 15 pages maximum and the Budget Narrative is 4 pages maximum (p. 8 of RFA). Is this 19 pages total?

Answer: Yes, the total combined pages may be up to 19 pages, but there is still a 15 page Service Work Plan maximum and a 4 page Budget Narrative maximum — an applicant cannot, for example, do a 2 page Budget Narrative and a 17 page Service Work Plan.

2.9 Subcontracting (competitive bidding required) [added 2/8/00]
If we become the prime CDE contractor and, in turn, subcontract for some of the deliverables, must we competitively bid that work?

Answer: In some cases, yes. All subcontracts over $50,000 total or over 25% of the original contract total must be competitively-bid. Small, incidental subcontracted work may not require that. There may exist circumstances (local availability, unique expertise, required timelines) that justify a sole-source situation in which the competitive-bidding process is not used. In those cases, it is important to contact the CDE in advance.